Water Quality Assessment Authority

1903. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Water Quality Assessment Authority set up two years ago has not done much work;

(b) whether it is a fact that the authority had sought the formation of State Water Quality Review Committees to improve co-ordination, assess the monitoring network and identify areas needing action; and

(c) if so, Government's response in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) to (c) The Water Quality Assessment Authority was constituted on 29th May, 2001. It has so far held two meetings *viz.* 26.9.01 and 14.5.03. The Authority has performed the following tasks:—

(i) Constituted the Expert Group for review of the present water quality monitoring programme for formulating a 'Monitoring Protocol'. The protocol has been finalized.

(ii) Constituted a Water Quality Monitoring Committee to assess the Water Quality Assessment Authority in its functions. The Committee has had one meeting on 25.11.03.

(iii) Constituted a Task Force to deal with the matters relating to development of water quality data information system, review of water quality monitoring network to suggest optimum network for the country and accreditation of water quality labs. The Task Force met once on 28.11.03.

(iv) Constituted a Working Group to deal with the issues relating to minimum flows in the riverine system. The Working Group met on 8.12.03.

(v) Requested all the State Government/Union Territories to constitute State Level Water Quality Review Committee with representatives from all concerned departments of respective State Governments and the Central Government, to review the monitoring practices at the State level and to highlight the important State issues for consideration by the Authority. So far, 31 State level Water Quality Review Committees have been constituted.